

THE OBIVYER

— Saturday, June 24, 1871. —



"Irene sat down to the piano"—p. 595.

TRIED.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "A STORY OF VIONVILLE."

CHAPTER XXVI.

SYDNEY LEIGH made his appearance at an earlier hour than May expected him that evening. She was alone with Irene in the drawing-room, as Mrs. Leigh generally went to her room for a time

after dinner; and at the moment he came in she was standing with her friend at the window, admiring a beautiful rose which had just bloomed in her basket of plants. He paused a moment at the door, and

looked at those two—his future wife and Irene Clive, and his face darkened as he noted the striking contrast between them. May could at no time be called pretty, though her face was winning and expressive; but placed side by side with the radiant beauty of the young Greek girl, she looked positively plain. She was really five years older than her companion, and there seemed an even greater difference between them, when her look of thought and care was compared with the sweet bright innocence of Irene's expression; but in every point of comparison poor May was on this occasion seen to great disadvantage; the marvellous grace of Irene's slender figure made her own seem heavy and awkward, though it was not so in reality, and her brown hair, wound simply round her head, looked dull and dead beside the sunny waves that swept over Irene's shoulders.

Sydney Leigh marked with his critical eye every line of contrast between them before he advanced and spoke to May. She turned round quickly, and he could not help noticing the glow of pleasure which lit up her face when she saw him; involuntarily, he wished that he could have seen the same on the beautiful countenance of the young Greek girl; but she only acknowledged his entrance by a quiet inclination of the head.

"I suppose you do not require an introduction to Miss Clive," said May, "as you have already met. You know who this is, do you not, Irene?"

"I know that it is Mr. Leigh, your cousin," she answered in her low, sweet tones.

"Not my cousin," said May, looking rather surprised; "what made you think he was?"

"I thought Mr. Leigh named you so this morning."

"I believe I did," said Sydney, hastily. "It always seems to me, May, as if there were some sort of cousinship between us; and here comes the lady who at all events has the honour of being aunt to us both," he added, smiling, as he went towards the door to greet Mrs. Leigh.

Sydney drew forward an easy chair for his aunt, whom he always treated with a sort of chivalrous tenderness, and as May and Irene sat down together on the sofa, he placed himself where he could study the exquisite Greek profile he had never seen equalled, save in a marble statue some three thousand years old, whose original resting-place was an island in the *Ægean* Sea, but which now stands in the sculpture gallery of the Louvre.

No one could make himself more agreeable than Sydney Leigh when he chose, and he did choose this evening; he was brilliant, witty, charming in every sense of the word, as he talked to the three ladies on all the subjects he could think of likely to interest them, and Irene, though she was rather silent, showed by the light in her eyes and the glow on her cheek, that she thoroughly appreciated his efforts for their amusement.

After a little time the door opened, and Dr. Fleming walked quietly and unannounced into the room. He had always been a privileged friend in the Bathursts' house—coming there for rest and relaxation whenever he had half an hour to spare, which was not very often. He used to say that after a day's toil in the atmosphere of suffering and sorrow, an hour spent with generous, high-souled May Bathurst was as refreshing to him as a draught of clear water sometimes was, when he came out of the stifling sick-rooms of the poor.

She started up and greeted him warmly now as he came forward, telling her he had come for a cup of tea and a little rest.

"You shall have that, and another pleasure as well; for I am sure you will be glad to see your former patient looking quite recovered."

"Indeed I am," said the doctor, shaking hands with Irene, who lifted her blue eyes gratefully to his face. "I am delighted to see you so completely restored, Miss Clive. They know how to make people well in this house, do they not?"

"Yes, indeed—well and happy," she answered in her soft voice.

"And how is my friend Xanthi?" said Fleming; "is she not dull without you?"

Irene looked smiling at May, who said with a merry laugh, "Not at all; for she has developed a romantic friendship for Chunder. It is most amusing to see them together, as neither can understand a single word the other says, and yet they manage to converse most comfortably by an elaborate process of gesticulation. I left them sitting together before the fire in the housekeeper's room, and they were quite sympathetic on the subject of their dislike to the cold English climate."

When tea had been removed, Sydney went up to May and said a few words to her in a low voice. She turned to the doctor.

"Do you think, Dr. Fleming, that Miss Clive is well enough to be a little tormented now?"

"It depends on the nature of the torment," he answered, smiling.

"It is only that I want her so very much to let us hear her sing. Do, dearest Irene," she added, passing her arm round the young girl, who sat by her side; "it will be such an immense pleasure to us all."

In an instant Irene's fair face became dyed with a crimson glow, and clasping her hands tightly together, she said in so low a tone that only May could hear her, "I have felt as if I could never sing again in all my life after that dreadful night. You know what I mean."

"Oh! that is all past and forgotten," said May, hastily. "It must never be mentioned again by you or any one else. This is quite a different matter; I only ask you to sing to give us all a great pleasure. You will not refuse me, I am sure."

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obligation to Miss Bathurst, that she did not think she had a right to refuse anything she asked her, however painful, so, gently placing her hand in that of her friend, she said, "I will do whatever you wish."

"You are the best of darlings!" exclaimed May, running to open the piano. "You can accompany yourself, I suppose?"

"Oh yes, I always do," said Irene; then turning to Mrs. Leigh she said, "did I not once hear you say the piece of music you liked best in all the world was that one from Handel's 'Messiah,' which begins, 'He shall feed His flock?'"

"Yes, my child, you are quite right," said Mrs. Leigh, pleased at the young girl's recollection of her words.

Irene sat down to the piano, and in an instant it was as if an angel had passed into the room and was singing one of the songs of the heavenly Zion; for truly Irene's voice was like nothing earthly in its wailing sweetness and wonderful pathos. They all listened to her in the deepest silence, scarcely daring to breathe, and when at length the exquisitely beautiful strain died softly away, it seemed to them such positive pain that the intense pleasure they had been experiencing should cease, that they implored her to go on at once and renew the charm. She complied without a word, and continued to sing as long as they chose to ask her, filling their very souls with such melody as not one of them had ever heard before.

During the whole time Sydney Leigh remained like one entranced, in a perfectly motionless attitude, leaning with both his elbows on the piano in front of Irene, and gazing into her face. At length May feared that she might be overtasking her friend's strength, and turning to Dr. Fleming to ask him his opinion, she was very much struck with the expression of his face. He was bending forward, his brows knit, and an anxious, almost stern, look in his eyes, gazing at Sydney Leigh with an absorbing scrutiny which had in it some meaning much beyond what she could fathom.

She spoke to him, but his abstraction was so intense that he did not hear her; then she touched him lightly on the arm. He turned round, and his eyes met hers.

"How abstracted you were," she said; "of what were you thinking?"

For a moment he made no answer, and then said very slowly, looking her full in the face, "Of you, chiefly."

Dr. Fleming never paid unmeaning compliments, and there was that in his tone which showed May that no idea of the kind was in his mind at present, while the strange look he kept fixed on her face seemed to go straight down into her heart, and awoke there a mysterious sense of terror and self-pity. What did he mean?

CHAPTER XXVII.

THREE months had passed away since Irene Clive first came to make her home with the promised wife of Sydney Leigh; and it was high summer now—the last week of a specially warm and glowing July. Secretly and silently the processes of Nature had been carried on, which had changed the aspect of the earth from the evanescent beauty of the fitful spring, to the full ripe glory of the year in its richest prime; and no less secret and silent had been the working of the human hearts, whose life-record we are giving here, maturing within them the elements of future storm and convulsion, while all seemed fair and serene around them, as the cloudless sky above their heads.

Their outward history during the three months which had just elapsed had been all sunshine and peace. Irene Clive had endeared herself more and more each day to her new friends, and had learnt how to make her willing services very useful to Mrs. Leigh, while to herself life seemed to have become a fairy dream of joy and brightness. Sydney Leigh had easily prevailed upon her to let him take her portrait, and he had commenced a very large picture, the size of life, of herself and Xanthi; for he was determined, he said, to reproduce on the canvas the exact counterpart of the vision which had presented itself before him on that occasion, when for the first time he beheld the angel-face of Irene Clive. He must have an ineffaceable recollection of that scene, to keep for the rest of his life, he declared, and he was ready, therefore, to undergo all the long and patient labour required for the production of a life-size picture of that description.

May, always anxious to facilitate his wishes, had a room fitted up for him as a studio in her town-house, similar to that she had already arranged for him at Combe Bathurst, and there Irene spent several hours of each day, content, in her gentle submission, to remain motionless as long as he liked, while, with hands that almost trembled in their eagerness, Leigh strove to give enduring life upon the canvas to the wondrous beauty that so completely satisfied his artistic longings.

For the first few weeks Mrs. Leigh was always present at these *séances*, for she looked on Irene now as her adopted daughter, and she watched over her with as much care as if she had been indeed her child, while May Bathurst used to take advantage of the whole party being, as she laughingly said, quite happy without her, to go out and try to satisfy her unquiet conscience by deeds of charity among the poor.

In the evenings they were generally all together, as they had been on the first day of Irene and Leigh's acquaintance, and very often Dr. Fleming made one of the party, as he had done on that occasion also. Sydney openly stated that he found much more gratification in listening to such singing as Miss

Clive's, than in the music or conversation offered for his amusement at the dinner-parties he used to attend, and therefore his change of practice was nothing remarkable; but May secretly wondered what it was that induced Dr. Fleming to come to her house so much more frequently than had been his habit formerly. Her woman's instinct told her plainly enough that it was not admiration for Irene Clive which brought him there, much as he did undoubtedly appreciate her merits; for she could see perfectly well that his whole attention was engrossed by herself; but what chiefly perplexed her was the undoubted fact, that it was some sort of uneasy solicitude respecting her which brought him so constantly into her presence, rather than the mere enjoyment of her society.

For the last month, however, and more, there had been a change in the position of affairs in consequence of Mrs. Leigh's serious illness. She had been seized with a sort of low fever, which had, of course, confined her entirely to her room, and had occupied almost all her niece's time in attendance upon her. May had insisted on nursing her aunt entirely herself, in spite of Irene's entreaties to be allowed to share her unwearied watch over her patient, partly because she felt it was the last time she should be able to render Mrs. Leigh any such service, with the exclusive devotion which would be impossible for her when she was Sydney's wife, and partly because she thought Irene still too delicate to bear the fatigue and confinement of the sick-room.

While May, therefore, grew pale and weary in her zealous, unselfish care of her aunt, whom she seldom left night or day, Irene, blooming and beautiful, continued to spend as many hours in Sydney's studio as he chose to exact of her in his capacity of painter, with no better chaperone than old Xanthi, who did not of course understand a single word they said in her presence.

This, then, had been the outward history of the inhabitants of May Bathurst's house that summer; but what had been the inner history—the history of heart and soul, which is alone the true life? In the case of Sydney Leigh it might have been summed up in one brief sentence—the entire absorption of all his faculties, the complete abandonment of his whole being, to a wild, intense, ungovernable love for Irene Clive. It had taken possession of him almost in that instant when her lovely face first dawned upon his sight, fair as the Eastern morn when it beams on the world of darkness, and had grown and strengthened with each day and hour since then, till now it had reached such a height that every other feeling and principle was borne down within him before its resistless power.

Two causes specially combined to make Sydney Leigh an absolute slave to the extraordinary attraction which the young Greek girl exercised over him. In the first place, she was the only woman he had ever

really loved, for, as we have seen, he had never had any sentiment for May Bathurst which rose above quiet friendship and esteem, and any other fancy he might ever have cherished had been nothing but a passing admiration for some pretty face, seen once or twice, and then completely forgotten; and, secondly, he had always been in the habit of making his own will and pleasure the governing power in his life, as he did not hold any religious creed which could oblige him to self-denial or control, so that when the strongest sentiment he had ever known took possession of him, he gave himself up to its passionate sway with a recklessness which soon rendered him really incapable of resisting its power. One influence alone had ever restrained Sydney Leigh in the systematic course of self-indulgence which he had carried on throughout his life, and that was the instinct of a gentleman, which had hitherto saved him from any mean or dishonourable act, even if prompted to it by his own wishes.

It was this, and this alone, which as yet held him back from flinging his obligations to May Bathurst to the winds, and openly avowing his overwhelming love for Irene Clive, and his intense longing to make her his wife.

In the first few weeks of his acquaintance with the beautiful Greek, he had still retained the wish to become possessed of Miss Bathurst's fortune, which had alone caused him to engage himself to her; but that, and every other restraining thought, had long since been swept away in the ever-rising tide of passion, which was bearing him on towards Irene Clive as the one sole good, and joy, and hope which life could have for him evermore.

His sense of honour alone still held him bound to the woman who had loved him through all her youth, with a love far passing human words, and this frail barrier would not long stand against the surging waves of the overpowering impulse which drove him to break away from all previous ties, and give himself, heart and soul, to the beautiful idol of his worship.

And Irene? how was it with her while day by day she lived in the presence of this man, whose beauty and fascination had won the strong heart of May Bathurst, and were little likely to prove powerless over her own? No woman, however guileless and innocent, remains ignorant of the fact that she is beloved, and Irene knew that she was dear to Sydney Leigh as light to the eyes that long have dwelt in darkness. She knew it, and her soul leaped out towards his with irresistible sympathy—she loved him with all the ardour of her Southern race, with all the fond devotion of a young heart never awakened before. But simple-minded and inexperienced, there was in her no thought of disloyalty or treachery towards May Bathurst. She had known, on her first entrance into the family, that her kind and generous friend was to be the wife of Sydney Leigh, and she

never doubted for a single moment that the engagement would be carried out; that the bond would be riveted on that first of November which she had been told from the beginning was to see them united. She never questioned how Sydney Leigh was to reconcile his undoubted love to herself with the marriage-vows binding him to another woman. She only knew that their wedding-day would be as a day of death to her; and she drove the thought of it away from her mind, that she might lose herself in the intoxicating sweetness of the present, and know what she could of the joy of life, before that dreadful hour quenched all its brightness in inevitable gloom.

So those two, having as yet said no word of love to each other, walked on over the smouldering volcano that soon was to burst into flame beneath their feet.

And May?—poor generous, trusting May Bathurst, who had brought this desolate and helpless orphan into her house, and given her a sister's share in her home, chiefly that by this deed of ungrudging charity she might prove to her Saviour she still would fain be his, though Sydney Leigh stood fatally between her and that higher love. Now, at this time, the deep unswerving truth of her own nature was fatal to her. She judged her promised husband by its standard, and so judging, utterly mistook him. He had told her when he asked her to be his wife, that he did so because he loved her; and she had believed him, and believed him still, without a shadow of doubt or suspicion. She gauged his love by her own. She would have considered it false and treacherous to have agreed to a life-long union with any one whom she loved less unchangeably and entirely than she loved Sydney Leigh, and she concluded that he had bound himself to her on the same principle; for herself, to have swerved one hair's breadth from her allegiance to her future husband, to have given one shadow of a thought to any other, would have been utterly impossible; and she never dreamt that the faintest breath of unfaithfulness could sully the

heart she believed to be as true and steadfast as her own. Not a cloud of jealousy or mistrust troubled her mind when she saw Sydney's evident admiration for Irene's beauty; it was to her as though she had seen him admire an exquisite flower or a lovely picture. She was perfectly aware that the young Greek was beautiful, and that she herself was not; and woman-like, she did regret the contrast so disparaging to her own appearance which Sydney's artist eyes must note between them. But to her sensitive mind it seemed well that there should be some pain connected with that charity towards Irene, by which she strove to propitiate her uneasy conscience; and for the rest she doubted not in her noble trust that since Sydney had loved her well enough to ask her to be his wife, no other woman could possibly be more to him than an object of passing admiration.

Mrs. Leigh was the only one of the actual inhabitants of that house who had any misgivings, and they were hardly developed in her mind when her illness rendered her incapable of considering the subject at all. Nor had she given much weight to her vague fears, even while she was able to dwell upon them, for her own intense affection for her niece blinded her to the probability of any one else being preferred before her; and she believed also that May's great intellectual superiority to Irene, who had little mental power or strength of character, would counterbalance her want of beauty in the estimation of a man of talent like Sydney Leigh.

Furthermore, the gentle old lady, who always thought better of every one than they deserved, trusted as implicitly as May did in her nephew's honour and sense of right; and so thus it was, that during the three months which had now rolled back into the past, all things conspired to wrap the whole family in a delusive calm, which gave as yet no sign of the tempest brooding in the future, and threatening to overwhelm one of them at least in almost irrevocable gloom.

(To be continued.)

HYMN OF THE GALILEANS.



THOU who art enthroned on high,
So far from human strife,
Canst Thou to us be now as nigh,
When bitter pangs are rife,
As when beside the walls of Nain
Thou didst allay a widow's pain,
And for her dead son knit again
The severed threads of life?

Θ Thou who once in Cana's halls
Didst share a marriage feast,
Art Thou as prompt to hear the calls
Of greatest and of least

As when that boundless love of Thine
Did first disclose its power divine,
And turn the water into wine,
Or hath Thy pity ceased?

O Thou who once in Galilee
The tempest's wrath did quell;
Who once didst bid its angry sea
Forbear to rage and swell;
Who, ever prompt to soothe and save,
Didst walk upon the seething wave,
And prove the stormy wind Thy slave—
Wilt Thou no more dispel

The storms that rage about us here,
And bid the waves be still,
That fright us oft in mad career
When we would do Thy will?
E'en Peter once began to shrink
Amidst the angry waves, and sink,
Forgetful in his fear, to think
Of all save present ill.

Do still our needs Thy thoughts employ
Who all our need dost know?
Dost Thou enhance our every joy
And soothe our every woe?
Or is it vainly that we try
To lift our hearts and catch Thine eye,
And vainly pant and vainly sigh,
Deserted here below?

Shall He who promised not perform?
Is Truth itself untrue?
Can He, whose love was proved so warm,
His love at length eschew?
Did He not promise to defend
His loving people to the end,
And from above the Spirit send
Their spirits to imbue?

The very lilies of the field,
That toil not, neither spin,
Have never known His face concealed,
Or failed His care to win;
Yet Solomon in all his day,
Though great and glorious his array,
Was never clothed as bright as they
Without a thought have been.

There's not a single sparrow falls,
The Lord Himself hath said,
And not a single worm that crawls
Is numbered with the dead,
But He who dwells above the skies
Regards it with His sleepless eyes,
And gives His sanction ere it dies—
He watches by our bed.

He ever stands about our path,
And spies out all our ways;
His love is greater than His wrath,
He watches o'er our days:
And Thou, who for our sins didst bleed,
Beside His throne dost intercede,
And plead as never man did plead,
To Thine eternal praise!

Then wherefore should Thy soldiers faint?
Why should Thy pilgrims doubt?
Why should his faith forsake the saint,
His wakefulness the scout?
What though the battle furious be,
Though great the perils of the sea,
And wily, too, the enemy,
Why stay the joyful shout!—

The shout of triumph in the air—
Is not the battle won?
Can there be room for fell despair
For us beneath the sun?
No; He who fights upon our side
Hath not in vain our foes defied;
He'll shield us all, what'er betide,
Until our task is done.

THOMAS HERBERT NOYES, JUN.

"THE EVERLASTING ARMS."

BY THE REV. ROBERT MAGUIRE, M.A., VICAR OF CLERKENWELL.

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."—Deut. xxxiii. 27.



THE text that heads this paper is one of those oft-interspersed passages and edifying sentiments which here and there occur in the historical books of the Old Testament, and which, for their richness and depth of meaning, so amply repay the diligent student of those portions of Holy Writ. The historical Scriptures are too often and too systematically overlooked, and a great loss is thereby incurred. Amid the mere details, and at intervals throughout the genealogies, and pedigrees, and histories of men and generations, we find such precious truths and promises as that of the text—great golden nuggets for those who search in the prolific vein of the inspired

Word, hid pearls dug out of the deep soil, green spots for the soul to feed upon, and such as are particularly refreshing to the hungry and the thirsty soul that seeks the Manna and the Rock for spiritual food and spiritual drink. In this delightful sentiment we have an expression of all that is good and true and hopeful in the covenant of God in Christ with man.

Those who meet together for purposes of religious worship and edification ought to cultivate a certain measure of "curiosity" (of a right sort) in their attendance on the means of grace, both public and domestic, each worshipper presenting himself before the Lord in the spirit of anxious expectancy:—"I wonder whether my soul will

receive comfort from this day's service? Will the hymns that are sung express my wants or my joys? Will the text be a promise to encourage me, or a command to discipline me, or an admonition to correct me? Whether shall I have enough food administered, or shall I remain unsatisfied and unedified?" Such thoughts as these in our assemblies would infuse new life into our services; there would be the suspense of expectation, a desire for food, a vivacity and liveliness throughout all the exercises of the day, which would be sure to bring down a great blessing from on high, to the refreshment of our souls.

Well, here, at all events, is a copious promise—"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Great Promiser! make good thy gracious promise unto us! If any of us be weary and faint in our minds, and need much of thy sweet comfort, through means of that promise grant us some of the joy of thy salvation!

The text is part of the blessing which Moses at the last bestowed upon the tribes of Israel. Before he ascended to his lofty death-bed on the mount, he delivered his dying message to his people. In speaking these, Moses was a prophet, and his utterances were prophetic, peculiarly and individually belonging to the tribes, in their temporal and spiritual interests. But all these belong to us also. Scripture history, Scripture death-beds, Scripture blessings, and Scripture sentiments are common property, belonging to all of us. It is not so in ordinary experience: a blessing pronounced upon me does not belong to you; and a death-bed benediction on you does not belong to me. Each man's history is his own, and no one else's. But the Scriptures, and all that they contain, are for all the world—"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." The blessing of the Spirit of God covers all. Though spoken originally to others, the promises of God are opened to us, and serve as stepping-stones across the flood, sure places on which we may set our feet, and be established in our goings. This blest promise of our text is one of these.

There are two kinds of promise here: one that is strong, and brave, and valiant, and heroic—"The eternal God is thy refuge;" and the other, tender, delicate, and sympathetic—"Underneath are the everlasting arms." To one class of minds the one commends itself, and to another class is the other more adapted, in proportion as the spiritual strength is great or small, stronger or weaker. And it is well to make a difference; there ought to be a classification of promises; for, as in all the other Scriptures, so in this, there is "milk for babes," and "strong meat" for those who by reason of age are able to bear it. To the

bolder spirits a promise would need to be in the form of a watchword, a war-cry, a rallying-shout, as the shout of a king in their camp. To the more sensitive Christian the promise must come as a tender thought, as a still small voice, as "a word in season to them that are weary." Different minds must needs be approached in different ways. Some, like the strong warriors of Gideon, amid the din of battle, the breaking of the pitchers, the flame of burning torches, and the battle-shout, would need to be addressed with a voice loud as the voice of a trumpet; whereas there are others of God's children, who, like those that are sad and pensive and pining on beds of sickness, must be approached gently, and spoken to in soft whispers of sympathy and love. Both of these classes are included in this promise.

I. "The eternal God is thy refuge." This is the bolder, grander, stronger promise, given to them that are bold and strong. "The eternal God!" Know ye in whom ye have trusted? No mere idol, no vain imagination, not a god made with men's hands. Nay, but the God of gods, the eternal God, the God of heaven—*He* is thy refuge! And with the eternity of his being, he is infinite in everything—infinite in power, Omnipotent; infinite in knowledge, Omniscient; infinite in space, Omnipresent; over all, within all, all in all. This is the God who is our refuge; as the Psalmist expresses it—"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Ps. xviii. 2). Unto this we are to flee, and be safe. It is neither disgrace nor cowardice for the strong warrior to take refuge within the fortress. It is no part of the duty of the soldier to abide always in the field. There will be times of weakness, and exhaustion, and extraordinary danger, in which he will be more in the path of duty out of the field than in it. Even Samson aided his great natural strength by entrenching himself in the rock Etam. Almost all David's spiritual experiences, as expressed in the Psalms, have their temporal counterpart in David's personal history; and as he had his seasons of temporal adversity and sorrow and disaster, and these were seasons of retirement from the fray, so is it in the spiritual history of every man—from the battle to the "refuge," from the field to the rock of defence.

There is no illustration so bold as that of "the rock"—the everlasting hills; so strong, because so deeply rooted; so safe, because so really impregnable; so secure, because so high and so far removed from the reach of danger. And in our God is all this—strength, security, lastingness; and all that is lasting in him is *ever-lasting*—"the eternal God," eternal in wisdom, in goodness, in power, and in love. And as it is true that "the

eternal God is our refuge," so it also means that God is our "eternal refuge." We are safe in him to day, safe in him to-morrow, safe yesterday, to-day, and for ever. It is a grand thing thus to place our deeply-rooted and implicit trust in him; not in the arm of flesh, not in the help of man, not in the face of clay, not in chariots or in horses, not in kings or princes, but *in the Lord*: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps. xci. 1). "Under the shadow"—what other shadow could thus protect us? "Under the shadow of his wings"—what substance half so protective and defensive as this shadow? Oh, if the shadow be thus helpful, what must the substance be? If such be the abundance of the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim, what shall the vintage of Abiezer be?

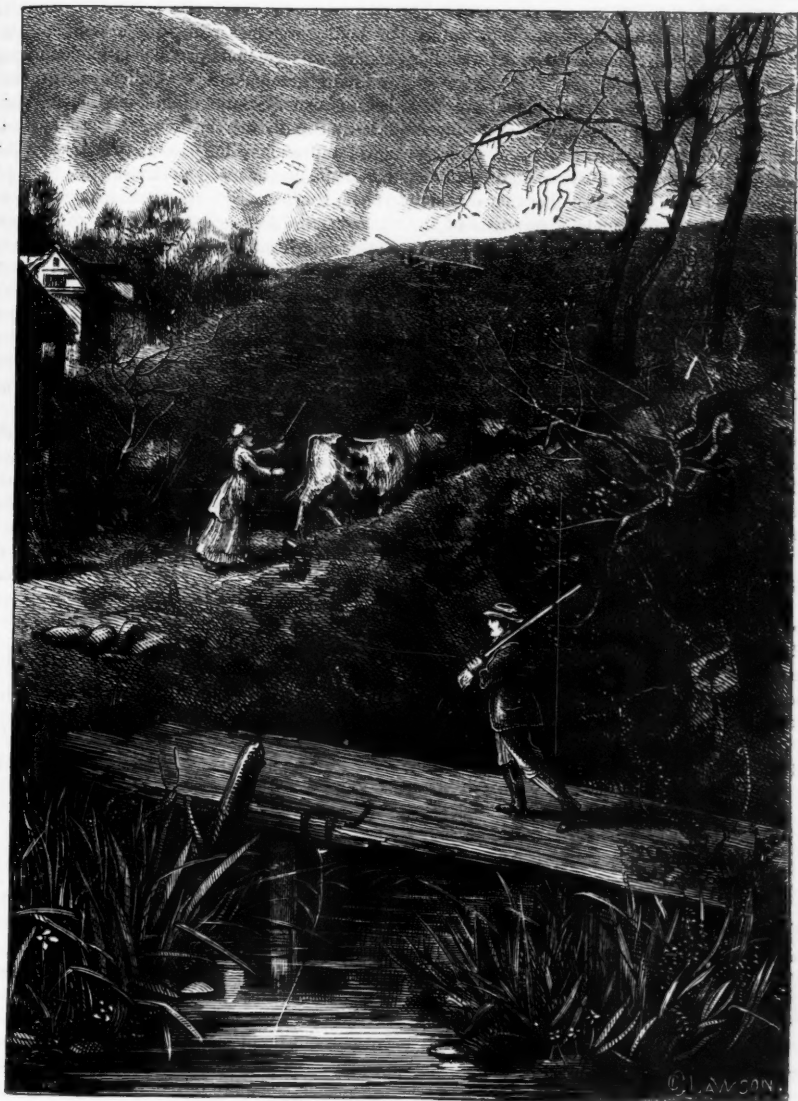
II. And now, the portion of the promise appointed for the weak, the feeble, and the tender ones. We must know that while there are warriors who can take refuge in the stronghold, there are also those that are wounded and faint and weary, who can neither fight nor flee: what are they to do? Here the promise enters—"Underneath are the everlasting arms!" The stronger men may walk, may run, may march, may flee unto the refuge; but the weak and wounded ones must be *carried*, and underneath them must be the carrying arms of the kindly bearers. If there is one word to express this phase of our spiritual state and condition it is the word "weakness." Now in the promise, "The eternal God is thy refuge," we seem to see suggested only the idea of strong walls, strong gates, strong defences, and strong defenders; but in the gentle promise—"Underneath are the everlasting arms!"—we see the result of the carnage and the strife; we see the ambulance, and within its curtains the weary limb, the blanched and pallid face, the bleeding wound, the throbbing heart, the fainting soul. O God, upbear our souls in days of sorrow, in hours of weakness, and in the fury of the fray. We trust in thy sweet promise—"And underneath are the everlasting arms!" Let us feel this, let us know it, let us be *persuaded* of it, and it sufficeth, Lord! When consciously borne in thine arms we can surely say—"Thy will be done."

The peculiar phases of our spiritual weakness, in which we most need the assurance of this promise, are—

1. *Weakness of spiritual youth and infancy.*—The infancy of the body is a time of weakness, and then we are borne and carried by the arms of the mother or the nurse placed underneath us. And so is it with spiritual infancy. It is a period of special need, and so it is also a period of special help. Babies in Christ are often exposed to trying temptation at home and abroad, within and without. May not

Moses have had in mind the day of his own exposure and casting-out, when as an infant he was committed to the waters of the river? And surely, if ever, it must have been then, that "underneath were the everlasting arms." So is it with the spiritual infancy; there are spiritual Pharaohs, spiritual edicts, spiritual persecutions, spiritual foes. But though they be mighty, the Lord our God is mightier. Still, it is hard to realise the promise—"As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Young beginners are very earnest, and very zealous, and they think they ought to carry all before them—temptations, sins, infirmities, and everything. They have yet to learn that this is a season of peculiar weakness, which must not be overtaken—the extreme infancy of the soul. For such an age the "everlasting arms" are needed. And for such as these may be suggested that significant passage, expressive of God's care of his people Israel—"He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him" (Deut. xxxii. 10—12. Here are the people of God in their national youth, upborne by God; fed as a child, without labour or toil; led as a child, by a Father's hand; instructed as a child, by the visible lessons of a ceremonial religion. It is, indeed, the imagery of the great eagle teaching its young to fly. First of all she "stirreth up" the nest, that is, to make them feel uncomfortable, and to drive them out; she fluttereth over them, so as to provoke and teach them to follow her; she "spreadeth abroad her wings, and beareth them on her wings." That is, the eagle plunges underneath her young ones, so as to protect them if their untried wing should prove unequal to the flight. They rise from her outspread wings in their attempt; and if they fail, and the wing is weak and weary, they alight upon her wings in their descent, and are safe. And even such are the "everlasting arms" to the young Christian—strength in proportion to their day and to their need. The good Shepherd will not overdrive the flock by a single stage (Gen. xxxiii. 13, 14), but He doth gently lead them, and still more gently carry them—in his arms, close to his bosom. "Underneath are the everlasting arms."

2. *Weakness of spirit.*—There are such times in the Christian's life, when the heart is faint, and the spiritual pulse but feebly beating; when the nights are dark and long, and the days are sad and dreary, and faith and hope and love wax cold toward Jesus. Spiritually it is this state of health—"The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint." What is to be done then? Whence is strength to be sought? "Underneath are the everlasting arms."



(Drawn by C. GORDON LAWSON.)

"Now is the grandeur of the daylight dying"—p. 604.

Therefore saith, the Psalmist—"Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe" (cxix. 117); and again, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not" (xvii. 5). And where is there strength for this like the arm of our God? Thou fainting spirit, thou fainting soul, awake, revive! "Underneath thee are the everlasting arms!"

3. *Weakness in prayer.*—Moses may have had his own experience again in mind—that day of Amalek when his hands were weak, and how the fortune of battle answered to the upholding of his hands in prayer (Exod. xvii. 11). On that occasion his brethren upheld his hands, a foretaste of the power of Christian communion; but there is no aid, and no upholding, like that of the "everlasting arms." All else must fail, but these never. There are many temptations and inducements that come upon us to make us weak in prayer. This is to relax our grasp of the sceptre, and to cease to wrestle. Let us beware of this; it is spiritual weakness; if yielded to, it will make us more weak; and cold, formal, heartless prayer is an abomination in the sight of God. Much of the Christian's strength in prayer may be sustained by oft-uttered ejaculations, thoughts, wishes, sent up to heaven. Wherever we may be, whatever we may be engaged in, the heart may surely be lifted up in a passing prayer. It is like the flight of a bird, which may be a distant flight, across a continent or across the main; but it assists the weary wing by oft alighting on a branch of a tree, or on the bosom of the wave. It may be but for a moment, but that moment renews its strength, and gives rest to the sole of its weary foot. Thus may we assist our spirit by oft snatches of prayer, every one of which would enable us to touch the throne

of the Eternal, and rest upon the "everlasting arms."

4. *Weakness in death.*—"My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever" (Ps. lxxiii. 26). In this hour of bodily weakness, in this assault of the last enemy, this gracious promise is indeed manifested in loving graciousness—"Underneath are the everlasting arms." Satan often tries to seize upon this last time to disturb the dying Christian with doubts and temptations; but God is ever true to his promise, and never more so than at this trying hour. If ever there is a time that Jesus is near his people, it is then. Angels were nearest to Jesus in his most trying seasons—in the Temptation, the Agony, and the Crucifixion. And is it not wonderful the glory that is imparted to the sunset of man's day, and the vigour communicated at the end of his journey? Hence our encouragement—"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. iv. 16).

So that, whether in life or in death, the child of God has this covenant promise of his covenant-keeping God—"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." We need add no more than this further guarantee of all God's promises (and therefore of this one), that in Christ they are "Yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor. i. 20).

"O Father-Eye that hath so truly watched,
O Father-Hand that hath so gently led,
O Father-Heart, that by my prayer is touched,
That loved me first when I was cold and dead:
Still do Thou lead me on, with faithful care,
The narrow path to heaven, where I would go;
And train me for the life that waits me there,
Alike through love and loss, through weal and woe."

THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY.

CHAPTER III.

SINCE the Deenes left Welling, Mrs. Wilson had grown poorer. The garden had not yielded so well, and one daughter had returned home with a bad hand, so at the time Chatty was longing for a birthday-party Molly was trying to find a comfortable place.

When, therefore, Chatty appeared to ask if she could be spared for a week or two, Mrs. Wilson was only too pleased to find even a temporary home for her in a place where she would be so thoroughly comfortable. So Chatty returned in triumph, with the handmaiden, it having been arranged that her box should follow.

"She is dreadfully little," grumbled Mrs. Deene, after she had seen her. Molly had hardly grown at

all, and in spite of her eighteen years looked almost a child. "She says she has only cotton dresses too; you cannot possibly have the party, Chatty."

"Quite impossible, quite," put in the Irrepressible, pompously and provokingly.

"Oh no! indeed it is not. She can work very nicely, and I will give her my old green merino dress, and she can alter it to fit her, and make it very long, and she'll look quite tall."

"How would it do," asked the Irrepressible, again breaking out, "to suspend her from the hook where we hang the ham at Christmas, and then pull at her heels? She might stretch."

"It wouldn't be possible," replied Mrs. Deene, opening her eyes, as if she thought he had really meant it.

The green merino dress was accordingly bestowed



upon Molly, who forthwith set to work to make it fit, and the next evening when Chatty went down to the kitchen to see how it was progressing, she found her trying it on before a little bit of broken looking-glass, "the shape of a three-cornered tart, and the size of one," as Chatty afterwards remarked. A weakness for pastry as well as for fruit, had Chatty, and knew most perfectly the shops where the bath-tubs had the largest bits of candied peel, and the jam in the tarts went all the way up into the corners.

"Molly, you will look splendid," she said. Molly had found the bit of broken looking-glass on the dresser, and having supported it against a jug on the table, was twisting and twirling before it, much to her own satisfaction, while the cat and three corpulent blackbeetles looked on admiringly.

"Well?" said Mrs. Deene, when Chatty ascended. "Oh, the dress does beautifully; and Molly, with a smart white apron, her turn-up nose, and little coarse red paws, will look delicious."

"You talk as if you were speaking of an estate," said the Irrepressible, reprovingly. "You shouldn't say 'delicious,' it isn't proper," and he tried to be impressive.

"It is proper, but it isn't right," returned Chatty, with a hazy notion that she was shutting him up, and a hazier still of her own meaning.

"Explain the difference; I don't believe you know it."

"Oh yes, I do. There's a great deal of difference," she added vaguely, mentally hoping he would drop the subject, which he did.

"Now, papa, we've settled about Molly, so let us have the party; please do," she said, and she was rubbing the paternal head caressingly.

"Well," he said, giving way, "I think you have set your heart upon it, so you must be indulged for once, I suppose."

"Let me see," said Mrs. Deene, "to-day is Friday; we don't want them to come much dressed, so I will write and ask them to come in and spend a quiet evening and have a little music."

"Irreconcilable," observed the Irrepressible, a remark which met with the contempt it merited.

So the party was agreed upon, and the invitations dispatched, much to Chatty's satisfaction.

The eventful Wednesday came at last, and long before it was possible for any one to arrive, Chatty laid the supper in the back dining-room. Maria Deene had a perfect mania for cooking, and the most extraordinary, the most mysterious dishes made their appearance at the Deenes' table. Jelly in out-of-the-way shapes, custards of hitherto undiscovered flavours, blanc-mange of unheard-of tints, all devised by the fertile brain of Maria Deene. On the occasion of the party, however, she surpassed herself, and the effect was, to say the least, astonishing. Chatty cut the sandwiches, while Emily and Fred looked on and

greedily devoured the cuttings which were necessary to make them of a uniform shape, and they had some fruit, and some flowers in pots, with the pots knowingly hidden by some little screens of cork and imitation moss, which Emily had made at school. Altogether, the table looked quite satisfactory.

"There's not much to eat, is there?" said Mr. Deene, who came to take a final view when all was arranged, while the others stood round him. "It's all show; only sandwiches and oyster patties besides the sweets."

"And blanc-mange and custards and jellies and trifle," began Maria, running over her own dishes.

"And my birthday cake," said Chatty.

"They are sweets," observed Mr. Deene.

"Besides, people don't come to eat," said Emily, a little contemptuously. She had not long left school, and was still romantic.

So Mr. Deene gave up the point, and marched out of the room again, followed by his children, and the door was locked, and they all went to get ready to receive their guests. All but Chatty, who had to see to Molly's toilet, and to put her through a last grand rehearsal as to how she was to open the door, and behave generally.

With the aid of the green drees, and cap and apron, Molly looked remarkably well, and the little round sunburnt face, with its bright expression and turn-up nose, had a certain pleasing attraction of its own.

"Oh, Molly, you look so nice!" exclaimed Chatty, and she walked round her as if she had been a wild Indian. "I declare you shall never go back to Welling. Mind you remember all my instructions. There, put the bow of your apron a little on one side, it looks careless."

Then Chatty went up-stairs to take one last look at the drawing-room, which, with the aid of fresh white curtains, and endless very clean antimacassars badly got up, with the starch still clinging slightly to the fringe, was doing its best to put on a good appearance. "I think it will do," she said, sitting down for a minute, in all the luxury of a morning-dress, slippers down at heel, and untidy hair. "I wish the carpet was not quite so shabby; and I wish that horrid little Dr. Denby was not coming. He is so fond of his own voice, and I don't like his singing a bit, and I don't believe his Italian is genuine—I'm certain he says anything that first comes into his head. Oh dear! I'm so tired, and—why, Emily, dressed already!" as her sister entered, in her best dress, and a pink bow in her hair, and as Chatty observed to herself, rather regretfully, with her eyes looking bluer than ever. "You look delightful," she said aloud, and then she thought, "if I could only be as pretty as Emily, or if Harold Greyson would only think me so, and I knew that he did! I must go now," she continued, again looking at her sister. "Oh, there's mamma, so that's all right."

She had been a shade nervous before, lest Emily being ready first, and Harold Greyson chancing to arrive first, they would have a tête-à-tête, "and girls are so artful, when there's no one to watch them," she thought. "Whoever can that be already?" she exclaimed, as a loud double-knock came to the street door; "some one is determined to be in good time. Here, let me get out of the way," and she ran out of the room, and hid herself on the staircase, while Mrs. Deene and Emily composed themselves, and looked as amiable and as unconscious as possible.

Molly came slowly and importantly up the kitchen stairs, keeping very bolt upright as she walked along the hall, in order to make the first really long dress she had ever possessed in her life look as

imposing as possible, opened the door, and found facing her a tall, broad-shouldered young man, soldierly-looking, and sunburnt and tired.

"This is Mr. Deene's, I think?" he said, inquiringly. "Why, Molly! it isn't you, is it? How ridiculous!" and he laughed and walked in, quite at home as soon as he recognised her.

"Oh my! it's Captain George!" she gasped, astonished. "You took me all of a heap, air, that you did."

"Well, I declare! George Baylis, come back just in time, and without a dress-coat," and Chatty rushed from her hiding-place, morning dress, trodden-down red slippers, and untidy hair complete. She looked rather well in her morning-dress, and she, alas, knew it.

(To be continued.)

THE CLOSE OF A DAY.

ALL the long day life unto life replying
From high to low, all things that move
and live,
Even as God commanded, Take and Give;—
Gay cloudlets gliding, and glad pinions flying,
And fond west winds about the tree-tops sighing
So faint for joy that I must feign they grieve,
And all the corn and meadow-lands aheave.

Now is the grandeur of the daylight dying:
The marshalled clouds are wearied with long vying
For the low sun's last languishing red ray,
And loom like ghosts, all wan and gaunt and grey:
The sleek kine cease to browse, and homeward hieing
Through vale and upland, take their tardy way,
Then a brown mist fast curtains up the day.

LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ;

OR, THE PLACE VENDÔME AS I SAW IT ON THE DAY OF THE MASSACRE. BY THE REV. E. FORBES, M.A.,
CHAPLAIN OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH, RUE D'AGUESSEAU, PARIS.

THERE was an hour on Wednesday, the 22nd of March, when everything in Paris, but the sun, was suddenly arrested in its course. The city had received a shock. A thrill of terror ran through the inhabitants; omnibuses stopped; shops were shut; the streets deserted, and all business suspended.

"Have you heard what has just taken place?" said a friend. "A frightful massacre in the Place Vendôme!"

Yes, it was too true. A body of unarmed, inoffensive citizens, in number about two thousand, had formed a procession, and were carrying a banner, on which was inscribed, "Appel aux Amis de l'Ordre." After walking down the Boulevards, they entered the Place Vendôme by the Rue de la Paix. Here were posted in great numbers the rebel National Guards, whose hands were already stained with the cold-blooded murder of the Generals Thomas and Lecomte. They barred the progress of these "Friends of Order." The latter endeavoured to press on their way. Seeing

this the command was given to load and fire, and immediately the cowards who had fled like sheep before the Prussians fired point blank into a dense body of unarmed citizens, whose only crime was the making a pacific demonstration and shouting, "Vive la République! Vive l'Ordre! Vive la France! Vive l'Assemblée!" Immediately some fifty killed or wounded lay weltering in their blood. Amongst these were a banker, a newspaper editor, an American gentleman, a printer, an officer, &c. The former, M. Hottinguer, was in the act of raising a wounded man when he was shot through the left lung and arm. The crowd fled in all directions, carrying everywhere the tidings of this terrible onslaught.

At once doors and windows are closed; the Bourse, the shops, the cafés are speedily emptied, the "rappel" sounded, the surrounding streets are occupied by the National Guard, and terror spreads through Paris.

Meanwhile about a dozen unrecognised bodies of the murdered citizens were carried off to the Morgue. On their way the people, meeting the



and procession, take off their hats, tears filling their eyes and indignation their hearts, as they mutter, "Assassins! brigands!"

Shortly after the scene I have described, I entered the Rue Castiglione, and walking up to the sentry guarding the Place Vendôme, was met with, "C'est défendu!" I asked for the commanding officer, showed him a card stamped with "Société Anglaise de secours aux Paysans," whereupon he allowed me to pass, sending a soldier with me. The agitation among the National Guards was still great. The man accompanying me declared a shot had first been fired by some one in the crowd, at them, which is untrue. He showed me the place of slaughter. The street and side pavement were covered with blood. The concierge and servants of the houses opposite the spot were mopping up the clotted gore. Every face was pale with terror. One tall, fine-looking man I specially noticed who was greatly agitated, the drops of perspiration standing on his forehead as he muttered, "C'est affreux—affreux."

I soon reached the guard keeping the entrance to the Rue de la Paix. Just at this moment an enormously stout man, resembling an English innkeeper, was being hustled by the crowd, and cries of "Prussien!" "Espion!" were raised. Four or five National Guards surrounded and pushed him into the open space, when the officer on guard was appealed to. I must say the man behaved with the greatest *sang froid*, for though shoved and dragged, he still kept his hands in his pockets and a cigar in his mouth, merely opposing his assailants by the *vis inertiae* of his own weight. He was marched off between National Guards. I was then allowed to pass the sentry, and found myself in the seething crowd, which I was glad to get through as soon as possible. One saw men in blouses, with savage and scowling faces, hideous with ferocity—beings that appear like stormy petrels on the wild wave of a revolution. At the corners of the streets groups were gathered discussing the frightful event. Evidently the sympathy of most was with the murdered men. Liberté, égalité, fraternité had received a terrible illustration. Paris was undoubtedly held by a body of brigands. One has often heard of travelling parties falling under their power, but for a city of two millions of inhabitants to be kept in daily and nightly terror by a body of insurgents, who have seized the Hôtel de Ville, the Mairies, the gates of Paris, and all the public offices, and who are setting aside the Government just elected by universal suffrage, is a sight the world has never before beheld. The rebels of Belleville and Montmartre, though numbering only one-tenth of the National Guard, have overawed the peaceable inhabitants and shopkeepers of the Boulevards and Rue de Rivoli, and the emasculated manhood

of Paris. The end of this tragedy must soon come. Whether Government, backed by the provinces and joining with the Friends of Order, can suppress these audacious rebels, with whom too many of the Line have fraternised, or whether the Prussians are to re-enter Paris, will be a question settled ere this reaches the eye of the reader.

Red Republicanism has given us its own interpretation of its motto. "Liberty" for themselves is tyranny towards others; "equality," is appropriating by violence their neighbours' honest earnings; and "fraternity," is to shoot down a brother whose views differ from their own. The position of France at this moment is reading a lesson to the world. That lesson is, that the strength and prosperity of a nation is in proportion to its moral virtues. "Decay begins within. The fall or collapse of a nation, whether from internal convulsion or external war, is the last stroke of the tempest bringing down the tree already rotten at the heart." The rampant spirit of Red Republicanism now riding roughshod over established government and social order, is the same infidel spirit which at the close of the last century paid public worship to a courtesan dressed up as the goddess of reason. Individual judgment will take place hereafter, but national judgment takes place in time. Where religion, the observance of God's day, social virtue, honour, truth, morality, disappear below the surface of society, can you wonder at an army being demoralised—at the manhood of a nation perishing, and drawing down into the vortex its greatness and glory?

I most fully endorse what the Archbishop of Paris says—viz., that the whole nation has need of a moral change, to which misfortune does not appear yet to have led them. "It is suffering from the vices which are dear to it, and which it does not consent to abandon. Love of labour, respect for law, the sentiment of duty, moderation, the spirit of concord, religious faith, the principles of virtue, do not return to the hearts of our people, and do not inspire social life as a whole. Light and frivolous, we are more occupied in talking loudly than in acting with constancy; and more occupied, indeed, in offering to act than in arriving at durable results. Neither study nor discipline affects us—reflection is too much for us, the law weighs heavily upon us, difficulties irritate us. We only admit convenient doctrines, in order that we may compose a doctrine more convenient. Yet we have under our eyes a spectacle well fitted to awaken in us the ardour of a generous patriotism—to make us feel the need of seeking a refuge of moral grandeur. Around us are heaped up ruins which neither private nor public fortune can for a long time repair; fire, destruction, pillage, sadden and desolate thirty departments; our ancient standards, charged with so many victories, are

now covered with mourning, and the foreigner marches insolently over the body of our mutilated country. . . . May God be persuaded by our supplications, and send us his Spirit of counsel and wisdom, of strength and piety, that France may know what she wishes, may wish what she

really wants, and do what she ought. May she be quickly healed of her wounds, which are specially moral ones, and return to religious belief; and, in consequence, to the practice of solid virtues, which are the real strength, the repose and honour of a nation."

AT LAST.

ALL poisons have their better part,
In all ill creatures good finds place.
Touch lovingly the blackest heart,
And even that's not wholly base.

An infant's wail ere now has stayed
The wild beast rav'ning for its blood;
A mother's tear turned back the blade
Against which vainly men had stood.

Thus kindly nature grants her boons,
So diverse, with no niggard hand;
And insect atoms, rolling moons,
Alike acknowledge her command.

Laws all-compelling mildly stern
Hold all; but whom do they obey?

That God who thus would have us learn
His pow'r—God's thoughts in act are they

We see not, know not, Him who reigns
For ever on the changeless throne,
Except by faith—then death or pains
But make His sons tenfold His own.

Life, nature, beauty, laws are terms
Using we darkly apprehend;
Instincts to guide immortal germs
Where all with perfect love shall blend.

Each wave that wind-swept seeks the strand,
Each cloud that floats into the west,
Are types which tell to every land
That after storm comes lasting rest.

M. G. WATKINS.

MAY'S WISH.

PART I.

MAY DOUGLAS was learning her lessons. Very difficult lessons they must have been, to judge from the pitiful expression that was stealing over her dimpled face, and the weary sigh with which she turned over the leaves of her French grammar.

"I wish," sighed May—"oh dear!—I do wish there were no such things as lessons."

The bright summer sun streamed in through the open window of the little breakfast-room where May was sitting at her lessons, and darted a golden ray across the book she was studying. The window opened down to the ground, and the soft green grass without looked temptingly fresh and cool.

May crossed her arms on her book, rested her little round chin on her hands, and thought how pleasant it would be if she had learned all her lessons and could go out and play. Suddenly a bright thought struck her, and she sprang up with all the excitement of a new idea.

"I will go and learn my lessons under the big oak!" she cried gleefully; "mamma told me to have them ready by the time she came back, but she did not say I was to stop here to learn them, and it will be so nice and cool in the woods."

No sooner said than done. May gathered up the

books in her arms, darted out of the window and across the lawn, and in less than three minutes had reached the gate leading to the wood. It was not a very large gate, but May had to rest her burden on the ground before she could open it, and even then it was no easy task for her tiny fingers to lift the latch.

It was a pretty sight to see her as she stood there with the sunlight glinting on her bright hair, and the stately elms, swayed gently by the summer breeze, bending towards her as though they loved her presence.

May looked on them quite as old friends, and half in fun, half in earnest, dropped them a little curtsey as she hastened on to her favourite seat beneath the wide-spreading branches of the ancient oak. If May had hoped that, in some unexplained way, her lessons would lose their difficulties when transported to the wood, she was disappointed. The troublesome verb over which she had been poring was just as unmanageable beneath the oak-tree as in the breakfast-room.

"Je m'en vais, tu t'en vas, il s'en va," droned out May, in a grumbling voice, as though the words had given her some personal offence. "Oh dear, if they must have verbs, why can't they have regular ones? Nous vais; no, nous, nous; yes, that is it. Nous—nous—allons."

May was evidently getting drowsy; her eyes were

closing involuntarily, and the book was slipping from her hand.

"I will just lie down and think about it a little," decided May, suiting the action to the word. "How I should like to go to a place where people do nothing," she murmured lazily, probably as the result of her meditation.

"Should you?" said a sharp little voice at her elbow.

May started, opened her eyes, and looked round. Just beside her, his head scarcely reaching above the level of the tall grass, was a diminutive man—"the oddest little creature," as she afterwards declared, that she had ever seen. He was not more than two feet high; and his apparel, which was certainly very quaint, consisted entirely of his own hair, which was very long, very thick, and quite as coarse as the reeds which grow by the side of ponds. This was closely matted and twisted together, so as to form a shaggy, sleeveless coat, and was finished off by a magnificent broad plait which was wound like a girdle round the mannikin's waist. This peculiar garment was black as coal, so that his bare, bony arms, which hung down by his sides, looked very remarkable. He had a pair of shrewd black eyes, which peered out in a very comical manner from under his shaggy eyebrows; and though so much of his hair had gone to make his coat, there was enough left to form a thick black bush round his yellow little face. All his features were, of course, on the most diminutive scale, with the exception of his hands, which were very long and very like birds' claws. May thought she would not like to shake hands with him. She was also wondering, in a vague, dreamy sort of way, why she was not frightened, or even very much astonished, at this unearthly-looking object, when she became conscious that the dwarf was continuing to speak, without taking any notice of her silence.

"Because, if you would," he was saying, in a quick, decisive tone, as if he were chopping the words as they passed through his lips, "I will take you."

"Oh! will you?" cried May, clapping her hands with delight. "Then there really is such a place? and what is it called? and is it far off? and—"

"Too many questions," said the little dwarf, sharply. "I never answer more than one at a time. Yes, there is such a place, or I would not have offered to take you there; and it is called the land of 'Do Nothing,' because the people are forbidden, under severe penalties, to exert themselves in any way."

"How funny!" laughed May. "And oh! how nice," she added; "for I suppose no one has to learn French verbs, or to write exercises, or to do sums. Shall we be long going there?" she asked, with sparkling eyes.

"Very long, as you walk," said the dwarf, a little contemptuously. "You must put on these"—and he drew a pair of silver slippers from his girdle. "They will lose their power, and become like ordi-

nary shoes, when we reach our destination; but then it will not matter, for no one hurries himself in the land of Do Nothing."

May put them on, and laughed for glee as she saw how pretty they looked, flashing through the long waving grass.

They went so fast that it seemed to May as if they were rather flying than walking. It was all so new and strange and wonderful, that she felt quite elated at the thought of such an adventure, and chatted away to her odd little guide as though she had known him all her life. She asked a great many questions about the land of Do Nothing, but the dwarf obstinately refused to gratify her curiosity, saying, impatiently, that she would know all about it when she got there. May thought the sooner they got there the better, though, certainly, by the wonderful way in which they flashed through meadows and lanes and wooded dells was very pleasant.

They were now fast approaching a stream that May knew well, for it ran through her uncle's grounds, and she had often come here with her cousins to pluck the forget-me-nots that fringed the banks. But never before had May heard such music—soft, but sweet and clear as a silver bell—as now stole upon her ear. She paused, entranced, and kneeling upon the bank, bent over the water to see from whence the sounds came.

"You are blind, poor earth-maiden," said the dwarf, compassionately; "you cannot see," and he touched her eyes with some water from a phial.

May now saw that what she had always imagined to be the reflection of the sun on the tiny waves of the rivulet was, in fact, the gleam of silver lutes, and what she had hitherto deemed but the soft flow of the rippling waters was the tinkle of the lutes, blended with the sweet voices of the water-sprites, who sang as they floated down the stream.

May thought it would be very pleasant to live in that beautiful water-world, to shelter from the sun beneath the broad leaves of the lilies, and be lulled to sleep by fairy music.

"How happy you must be!" she said wistfully, to a laughing sprite, who was sportively holding up her silver lute that it might sparkle in the rays of the sun. "You have no one to tease you with work or lessons, nothing to do all day long but float lazily down the beautiful cool river and enjoy yourself."

"Nothing to do!" laughed the sprite. "You are very much mistaken, little maiden; we are as busy as the day is long. We teach the baby-fish to swim: we rescue the summer flies when, heedlessly flying too low, they fall into the water; every day, from its source in the distant mountains to its outlet in the sea, we hasten down the river to sprinkle fresh drops of water on the flowers that fringe the banks; and at night on our silver lutes we play the strains to which the wood-nymphs dance. I will tell you what I did yesterday. Far in from the bank grew a blue forget-

me-not, so hidden by tall grass that my sisters had not noticed her, and she was dying from thirst. The zephyr, who loved her, was playing softly round her drooping head. I heard his murmuring lament, and threw some silver drops upon the blue-eyed flower. She raised her head, revived, and the zephyr in his glee rushed wildly across the meadows and rung a joyous peal of triumph from the graceful bluebells. I framed it into a song, which I sang last night at the concert of the elves. But I must hasten on, for I hear the bluebells calling to me that they are thirsty; so farewell, you foolish little maiden!" and with a laugh that sounded like the dash of a fairy brooklet over silver pebbles, the sprite vanished down the stream.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

187. In Gideon's preparation for battle with the Midianites, a command of the law was strictly observed. What was it?

188. In Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple there is a remarkable reference to a passage in the Pentateuch. What is it?

189. What reason is assigned in the Mosaic Law for limiting to forty the number of stripes which it permitted to be inflicted on a criminal?

190. The same proverb is quoted in the First Epistle to the Corinthians and in the Epistle to the Galatians. Give it.

191. St. John records but one discourse of our Lord's delivered in Galilee. Name the passage.

192. What is there remarkable about the appellations given to Aristarchus and Epaphras in the Epistle to the Colossians and in the Epistle to the Philippians?

193. How far is there Scriptural authority for the epithet "Magus" applied to Simon Magus in the Acts?

194. "He hath charged me to build Him an house." To what did Cyrus allude in these words?

195. Samuel anticipated the later prophets in declaring the worthlessness of sacrifices as a substitute for obedience to God's commands. Quote the verse.

196. How is it shown that it had been foretold that David should have Saul in his power?

197. When in Ezra's time an assembly was held on the subject of the marriages of the Israelites with the native inhabitants of Canaan, by what penalties was attendance enforced?

198. Is there any mention of the Sabbath in the historical books after the time of Moses?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 576.

172. Gen. xiii. 10; Gen. xli. 19; Deut. xi. 10.

173. 1 Chron. iii. 1-5. Daniel and Nathan.

174. Jonathan, 1 Sam. xiv. 6; Asa, 2 Chron. xiv. 11.

175. (1) The civil war; (2) Abner's change of party; (3) his assassination by Joab.

176. Josh. x. 13; 2 Sam. i. 18.

177. Gen. x. 21. "Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth THE ELDER," &c.

O MOTHER! WHAT IS IT TO DIE?

A POEM FOR A LITTLE GIRL. BY W. C. BENNETT, AUTHOR OF "BABY MAY," ETC.



mother! what is it to die?
To sleep alone beneath the grass;
In the dark ground, shut up, to lie,
And not to see you when you pass?

"Never to hear or see again;
Never again to rise and walk,
Or eat, or wake; and all in vain
To try to come to you, or talk?

"Don't let me die! I am afraid
Into the dark to go alone—

In the cold wet ground to be laid,
Shut from all by the heavy stone."

"Hush, little darling! though we say
That those who die are buried here,
It's but the body here we lay;
You of the dark need have no fear.

"To die, is but to leave our home,
To go to a dear home above,
Where soon to you we all shall come,
And share our Father God's dear love."